

FEBRUARY 2000

CALTRANS DISTRICT 7 EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

Inside Seven

NO TOLL, JUST ROLL ON THE VINCENT THOMAS BRIDGE

Vincent Thomas Bridge



A formal ceremony was held Friday, January 14, marking Governor Gray Davis Administration's official removal of tolls from the Vincent Thomas Bridge located in the Los Angeles Harbor area of Southern California. Officials representing Governor Davis, local elected officials, the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans representatives, other dignitaries and members of the media were on hand as officials "ceremonially demolished" the last remaining toll booth with sledgehammers, and said "good-bye" to tolls on the bridge after their collection for 36 years. This year the bridge will be 37 years old.

Robert W. Sassaman, District 7 Director and Master of Ceremonies, said, "Caltrans is pleased that all members of a dedicated staff of bridge workers, including toll collectors and others, have been placed within Caltrans." Sassaman thanked Governor Davis; members of the California Transportation Commission; Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal, 54th District; Senator Betty Karnette, 27th District; and Transportation Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet for their efforts in the removal of tolls from the well-traveled bridge.

According to Governor Davis' spokesperson, Michael Bustamante, "After estimating that the cost of collecting the toll over the next year would equal or outstrip the toll revenue, the California Transportation Commission, with the support of the Davis



Left to Right: Robert Abernethy, Commissioner, California Transportation Commission, Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal and Senator Betty Karnette officially end the 36-year toll fee by taking sledgehammers and "ceremonially demolishing" the last remaining toll booth on the Vincent Thomas Bridge.

Administration, eliminated toll collection as of January 1, 2000 at 1 a.m."

Assemblyman Lowenthal and Senator Karnette were both strong forces behind removing toll collection. "I applaud the work and leadership of Assemblyman Lowenthal and Senator Karnette to eliminate this now unnecessary toll," said Governor Davis. "With the elimination of this toll, motorists will travel faster in and out of the port area."

"Fifty cents may seem like a small amount, but when you pay it day in and day out, it adds up," said Senator Karnette. "We're glad the governor wanted to eliminate the toll. This is a bonus for drivers."

Assemblyman Lowenthal added, "The toll on the Vincent Thomas Bridge no longer serves a purpose. It seems ridiculous to collect a toll for no other purpose

than to pay for the toll's collection." He went on to say that he is proud of the role he played in ending the toll. He added, "I would also like to thank Caltrans for honoring their commitment to find other jobs for all the toll collectors. This was an extremely important element in the overall plan."

Other dignitaries present for the ceremony were: Mr. Dana Reed, Chairman, California Transportation Commission representing Governor Davis; Mr. Tal Finney, Senior Assistant and Director of Policy for Governor Davis; Mayor Beverly O'Neill, City of Long Beach; Rudy Svorinich, Jr., Los Angeles Councilman, 15th District; Dan Baker, Long Beach City Councilman, 2nd District; Frank Colonna, Long Beach City Councilman, 3rd

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THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who were involved in the Y2K effort for your extraordinary planning and implementation strategies which got us through the New Year with flying colors. A number of people put in extra hours at inopportune times on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day away from their families and friends to spend time working on computers, traffic operations, maintenance issues and emergency planning, all as part of a major effort to ensure that Caltrans facilities would be operational for the safety of the motoring public.

As part of the effort, Caltrans Director José Medina held two video-teleconferences with all twelve District Directors — one at 10 p.m. on New Year's Eve to ensure that preparations for Y2K were being implemented — and the other at 10 a.m. New Year's Day for a briefing of the previous twelve hours' activities. In addition, I would like to personally thank Chuck Webster, Region Manager, North Region Maintenance, for providing my transportation from the Rose Parade on New Year's Day to attend the 10 a.m. New Year's Day video-teleconference.

My appreciation also to Mike Miles, Office Chief, Maintenance, and his Region Managers and dispatchers, who, from 10 p.m. New Year's Eve to 2 a.m. New Year's Day made sure that the Emergency Operations Center at the Bandini/Commerce Yard was staffed to deploy personnel in the event of an emergency. In addition, our Transportation Management Center was capably staffed around the clock. Additional staff was assigned to various posts at the District Office Building making certain that everything was running smoothly as planned.

Once again, my personal gratitude to all employees for all their extra efforts during the critical period of Y2K. And may I offer this bonus to each and every employee who worked during the Y2K effort: No one who worked during Y2K will be required to work during Y3K!

On another subject, transportation

Quality Corner

Caltrans THE LEADER IN QUALITY TRANSPORTATION

Quality Celebration Week: Four Teams Win Awards!



Workplan Statusing and Reporting Team Award Winners: Back row, left to right: Susan Yee, Mogus Brook, Fely Dizon, Greg Farr, Kelly Lamare, Emad Gorgy, Sheik Moinuddin, Peter Wong and Reza Ameri. Front row left to right: Richard McCafferty, Paul Sullivan, Refugio Dominguez, Cindy Quon, Adrienne Labanieh, Lan Saadatnejadi, Steve Tran, Tasha Johnson, Nema Mehta, Rita Allen and Raja Mitwasi.

Every October, District 7 meets to celebrate Quality in Caltrans (QIC) and to discuss ideas for improving ways of doing business. The kick-off event for Quality Celebration Week took place October 21 at the 107 South Broadway auditorium as dozens of QIC team members and others joined one another to celebrate achievements and look forward to a new year of accomplishments ahead.

Raja Mitwasi, District Division Chief, Planning, was Master of Ceremonies and discussed the importance of QIC as well as the vision of District Director, Robert W. Sassaman. He said Sassaman's vision is "for Caltrans to be recognized as the most efficient, innovative and responsible transportation organization."

Mitwasi also noted that, "Quality in District 7 focuses on the entire process from start to finish. This means getting everyone involved in the process, and everyone being responsible, paying special attention to customer requirements and concentrating on continuous improvement."

Currently, there are 29 formal Quality

Teams in place at District 7, in various stages of development. Awards were presented to four of these teams who have all worked diligently together to discover ways to improve customer service, resolve problems, create solutions and keep the QIC program thriving. Adrienne Labanieh, Headquarters Quality Program Coordinator, was on hand to help present the awards.

The first award winner, the Quality Electrical Design Committee, was started four years ago under the leadership of Tad Teferi, Senior Transportation Engineer, with guidance from Efim Zabezhinsky, Senior Electrical Transportation Engineer. The team's goal is to promote uniformity in design practices between design groups, and reduce the number of design-related and avoidable construction change orders (CCO's). In addition, Tefari said the team's objectives include: reduction of CCO's of their electrical design work; achieve design standardization in District 7; implement peer design review; and update design work standards, practices and procedures.

The second award went to the



Elhami Nasr, second from left, accepts the Local Transit Project Delivery Task Force Team Award on behalf of his team members. With him are Refugio Dominguez, left, Adrienne Labanieh, second from right, and Raja Mitwasi, right.



System Planning Quality Team Award Winners: Left to right, back row: Mike Valcho, Ed Humenik, James Vu. Middle row: Refugio Dominguez, Lou Bedolla, Sam Tapia, Ruby Parker. Front row: William Mosby, Adrienne Labanieh and Raja Mitwasi.

Workplan Statusing and Reporting System Team. In August, 1998, pursuant to the passage of SB45, Headquarters mandated statewide that each district's Capitol Outlay Support (COS) compile information on projects for resource allocation and other important purposes. Thus, the Workplan Statusing and Reporting System. From their efforts, what is now "on line" used to be hundreds of pieces of paper to review. The new system makes troubleshooting and problem-solving much simpler. And there is much less lag time between the actual information and what is "on line." Lan Saadatnejadi, Office Chief, Capitol Outlay Support, Data Management, and the Team Leader, noted that they are now able to pool each other's capabilities for technical expertise, which has been a big accomplishment for everyone involved in the team. And through the efforts of personnel utilizing the system, the team is continuously refining it as they use it.

The third award winner was the Mass Transit Program's Statewide Local Transit Project Delivery Task Force. The Task Force, under the leadership of Elhami Nasr, Local Transit Project Delivery Project Manager, was formed in order to improve project delivery and provide better customer service to both internal and external customers. According to Nasr, the team charter is, "To determine the causes of slow delivery and completion of local transit projects, and to identify possible solutions." The partnership of representatives from regional agencies, local transit agencies, Caltrans Districts and

Headquarters, will work toward the standardization of procedures for measuring project delivery, monitoring project delivery and enhancing accountability through more timely project delivery reporting. This effort is being conducted in coordination with Local Programs and Regional Transportation Planning efforts.

The fourth team award winner, Planning's System Planning Quality Team, won the Explorer Award. The team updated and improved the old Transportation Concept Report format for quality, reliability, usability and focus. In the future, team members will update the District System Management Plan and the Transportation System Development Plan. Led by Bill Mosby, Senior Transportation Planner, the team's ultimate goal is the updating an improvement

of all of the District's long-range planning documents.

At a recent District Staff Meeting, Sassaman conveyed his positive comments about the QIC Program and said, "Members of the Quality in Caltrans Program are doing an outstanding job. There has been a lot of effort put into the program and a lot of great ideas have come out of it; the teamwork has been fantastic."

Mitwasi concluded, "I would like to thank each of you who make Quality a part of your daily work, and who continually find ways to improve the way we do business."

Congratulations to the many deserving team award winners and everyone involved in the extraordinary QIC effort! •



Electrical Design Committee Award Winners: Left to right, back row: Peter Wong, Yefim Zabezhinsky, Amare Shimelis. Middle row: Refugio Dominguez, Farida Mahmood. Front row: David Gonzalez, Adrienne Labanieh and Raja Mitwasi.



With the beautiful Vincent Thomas Bridge in the background, Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal, at podium, says, "No more tolls," as he displays the only remaining toll sign removed from the bridge. Dana Reed, Chairman, California Transportation Commission, left, and Robert Abernethy, Commissioner, California Transportation Commission, right, look on.

No Toll

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District; Ray Grabinski, Long Beach City Councilman, 7th District; Ms. Mariane DeGiorgio, representing Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa; Mr. Robert Abernethy, Commissioner, California Transportation Commission; Mr. Larry A. Keller, Executive Director, Port of Los Angeles; Mr. Gus Hein, representing the Port of Long Beach, and his guest Doctor John Kashiwabara; Mr. Phil Clark, representing the California Trucking Association; Mr. Mike Molina, President, San Pedro Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Art Almeida, Past President, San Pedro Bay Historical Society, and Mrs. Art Almeida; Ms. Kay Zahn, Vincent Thomas Bridge photographer; and Mr. John Olguin, representing Mrs. Vincent Thomas.

The Vincent Thomas Bridge is Southern California's first and California's third largest major suspension span. It was the only toll bridge in the Los Angeles area and is the first harbor structure that catches the eyes of motorists driving south on the Harbor Freeway. Opened in the fall of 1963, it was designed by the Bridge Department of the California Division of Highways, now known as Caltrans. The bridge spans 6,060 feet, cost \$21 million and officially opened to commuter traffic on November 15, 1963.

The 50-cent toll was collected since

1983 on the westbound direction only of the bridge that connects San Pedro to Terminal Island. Previous to 1983 the toll was 25 cents collected eastbound and westbound. And eliminating the toll will not only save commuters money, but time as well.

The bridge is unique because it is the only suspension bridge in the world supported entirely on piles. State designers and engineers sunk 990 steel piles to support the towers, the bents and the anchorages. Each pile supports 145 tons. The main anchor footings, on both sides, were hammered 50 feet underground. Each anchor block weighs 23,000 tons.

At a height of 185' above water and spanning the main channel of the Los Angeles Harbor from San Pedro to Terminal Island, the bridge was named in honor of Assemblyman Vincent Thomas of San Pedro, who was instrumental in making the graceful structure a reality.

Groundbreaking on the project was on May 28, 1960. In 1961 the California Legislature passed a special measure to name the structure after Thomas in honor of his persistence and faith in the bridge's future success. The first steel was erected May 30, 1962. And on Grand Opening Day, November 15, 1963, Thomas paid the first toll.

The suggestion to build a bridge over the channel first arose in 1901. The City of Los Angeles initially settled for a ferry system in 1941 because it was faster and

more economical. But in 1948 the ferry system had become inadequate to handle the growing volumes of port traffic, and Assemblyman Vincent Thomas proposed funding for a tube or bridge system. The bridge was favored because it would be sufficiently elevated for passage of vessels beneath and it would carry four lanes of traffic, and a tube would carry only two.

As the Port of Los Angeles area grew and facilities became more crowded, the natural step was to develop Terminal Island. The bridge provided a vehicular connection between the port cities of San Pedro, Wilmington and Long Beach on one hand, and Terminal Island on the other, as facilities in the area developed, such as shipping, shipbuilding and ship repair; production, refining and storage of crude oil and gasoline; generation and transmission of electric power; lumber yards; packinghouses and canneries; as well as a naval base on the island.

The Vincent Thomas Bridge opened up Terminal Island and made expansion of the ports possible. The graceful span has promoted harbor growth and prosperity. Today, approximately 32,000 vehicles cross the bridge each weekday. A favorite tourist attraction in the Los Angeles area, the bridge is also very much in demand by the television and movie industry. It has been a welcome sight for residents, visitors and many vessels, including those from the U. S. Navy.

"There are people all over the world

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Robert W. Sassaman, at podium, addresses an audience of over 50 at the "No Toll, Just Roll" event to celebrate the end of toll collection on the Vincent Thomas Bridge. Seated were, from left to right: Dana Reed, Chairman, California Transportation Commission; Tal Finney, Senior Assistant and Director of Policy for Governor Gray Davis; Robert Abernethy, Commissioner, California Transportation Commission; Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal; Senator Betty Karnette; and Mayor Beverly O'Neill, City of Long Beach.

Meet Henry Harris: Master Equipment Operator

As if it wasn't enough for Henry Harris of the Chilao Mountain Crew to win first-place honors for District 7 at last June's Equipment "Rodeo" (a major accomplishment in itself), the expert Equipment Operator went on to prove himself again. Putting his honed skills to the test last summer, Harris placed second all-around in the State Finals in Oakhurst, California; and he went even further by placing second at the Colorado Nationals for the plow truck event in early November. How talented can one Equipment Operator be? Very, very talented!

An Equipment "Rodeo" is a friendly competition where Maintenance personnel test their proficiency in the operation of a variety of Maintenance equipment. In addition, the competitive events promote personal and operations safety, and provide and motivate training.

In accomplishing his feats of mastery on a number of pieces of Maintenance equipment, Harris has added to his substantial collection of awards and trophies. Ed Toledo, Maintenance Supervisor, said, "Henry's reputation for being a top-notch Equipment Operator is spreading throughout California and into neighboring western states."

A competitor for the past eight years, Harris says his favorite event is the grader competition which puts man and machine through a rigorous obstacle course. And with his prizes of jackets, specialized belt buckles and the famed District 7 trophy in hand, Harris hopes to be victorious again this year. The skillful Harris said, "I am very excited about winning last year. And I plan to participate this summer and win in every event." Toledo added, "Henry has his sites set on being 'number one' in the State Finals and on to the Nationals this year, and there is no doubt in my mind that he will achieve his goal."

Harris said that he encourages everyone to participate in the "Rodeo" this year. He said, "The Rodeo is a great way



Left to right: Mike Evans, former Acting Office Chief, Maintenance and Ed Toledo, Maintenance Supervisor, watch as Henry Harris (center) receives hearty congratulations from Chuck Webster, North Region Maintenance Manager on his well-deserved award.

to get to know the Equipment Operators from other Districts and to get to show your expertise to each other, as well as learn from each other. And it's also fun to just come and watch the friendly rivalry."

Caltrans applauds Henry Harris on his worthwhile achievements and wishes him the best of luck during this year's competition. •

Caltrans Participates In Simulated Emergency

By Ivy Estrada

Late last October, Caltrans Media Relations/Public Affairs personnel were invited to the Office of Emergency Services, which is located on the property of the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Los Alamitos. The purpose of the invitation was to participate in the management of a simulated emergency. The simulated emergency was a leak at the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station.

The emergency management team was divided into the following groups: Operations; Plans/Intelligence; Finance/Administration; and Management.

Once the simulated emergency occurred, the emergency management team of approximately 20 people gathered in the groups listed above and prepared action plans that they presented to the entire team. Implementation began.

Staffing and budget needs were identified; elected officials were briefed; and detailed information including long- and short-term sheltering/relocation and disaster assistance information was disseminated to the public. Aid was solicited from traffic control, law enforcement, the National Guard, the Department of Agriculture, the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) and others. As reports were received regarding the various stages of alert (Alert to Site Area Emergency to General Emergency), planning and emergency management needs and actions changed.

Each person on the emergency management team was kept informed by television, radio, video monitors, clocks in 10 time zones and by a color-coded status board that was updated constantly.

The simulation proved to be a very worthwhile exercise because it enabled Caltrans Media Relations/Public Affairs personnel to become acquainted with the team effort involved in crisis management and it clarified the key elements during a public emergency. For others who are regular employees of the Office of Emergency Services, it was one of many routinely scheduled drills. One could see that practice makes what could be a stressful intervention, calm and effective crisis management. •

No Toll

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who know this bridge," concluded Senator Kernet. "Now we can look across and really feel free."

Caltrans wishes to thank the California Highway Patrol, Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal's office, the California Transportation Commission, and the following Maintenance and Bridge personnel for their assistance with the January 14 "No Toll, Just Roll" ceremony: Richard Luecht, Supervisor; Steve Powell, Leadworker; Gerald Rutledge, Leadworker; Johnnie Garcia, Equipment Operator; John R. Garcia, Equipment Operator; Jason Scriven, Maintenance Worker; Sergeant Fred Miller, toll collections; Sergeant Solomon Armond, toll collections; Nate Cradle, Regional Manager II; Kevin Sciotto, Area Superintendent; and Ed Prescott, Area Superintendent. •



Equal Opportunity Corner

Are You Asking The Right Questions?

By Cathi McMahan, Equal Opportunity Officer

Various federal and state laws regulate the questions an employer can ask a prospective employee. An employer's questions — on the job application, in the interview or during the testing process — must be related to the job for which a candidate has applied. The employer's focus must be on what he/she needs to know to decide whether or not this person can perform the functions of the job.

Take the following quiz to determine if the questions are legal. Decide whether they are acceptable or unacceptable.

1. In your job, you will handle large sums of money. Have you ever been arrested for stealing?
2. There will be a number of weekend conferences you and your manager will need to attend together. Does overnight and weekend travel present a problem for you?
3. This job requires you to move 45-pound boxes from one area to another. Are you able to do that with or without reasonable accommodation?
4. Would your husband be willing to relocate?
5. This job requires fluency in Spanish. Are you fluent?
6. We need a two-year commitment when hiring for this position. Are you planning to take any maternity leave over the next two years?
7. What kind of reasonable accommodation would you need to perform this job function?
8. Are you legally entitled to work in this country?
9. From your résumé, I noticed that you are actively involved in your church. Would it be a problem for you to work on Sundays?
10. How many days were you out sick last year?

It is the employer's right to establish job-related requirements and to seek the most qualified individuals for the job. It is presumed that the information obtained through application forms and interviews is used by the employer in making selection and assignment decisions. For this reason, the employer should make only those inquiries necessary to determine the applicant's eligibility to be considered for employment.

Answers:

1. *Unacceptable.* Employment cannot be denied on the basis of arrests without convictions.
2. *Acceptable.* Overnight and weekend travel is a specific job requirement.
3. *Acceptable.* This question states an essential job function and legitimately asks if it can be done with or without reasonable accommodation.
4. *Unacceptable.* Specific inquiries about a spouse are considered unfair employment questions.
5. *Acceptable.* Being fluent in Spanish is a specific job requirement.
6. *Unacceptable.* All questions related to pregnancy are illegal.
7. *Unacceptable.* Worded this way (as opposed to question 3), the question asks the candidate to admit that he/she has a disability.
8. *Acceptable.* Asking whether a candidate is legally entitled to work in the United States is not only permissible, but also legally required.
9. *Unacceptable.* This question indirectly solicits information about a candidate's religious affiliation.
10. *Unacceptable.* This question probes the candidate's health status and is likely to elicit information about a candidate's disability.

Caltrans' Equal Opportunity Policy states that Caltrans provides equal opportunities to all employees, applicants and clients based upon merit and excellence of qualifications. If you didn't score well on the quiz, it's an indication that your interview questions may not be legal. Remember that questions must demonstrate whether the candidate can perform the essential functions of the job. Also make sure to have a well-written job description for candidates to review to determine if they can perform the functions of the job. If you have questions about your interview questions or job descriptions, please contact Cathi McMahan in the Equal Opportunity Office at 213-897-0597. •



Ms. Judy Reynolds
Training Officer

Dear Ms. Reynolds:

The Back to School Safety Smarts Fair at the Petersen Automotive Museum was a success! Your organization was one of the six traffic and safety organizations that participated. The event served many museum visitors. It was very nice to see so many traffic and safety organizations all in one place. The presentations of each organization was excellent; so many parallels among each of the organizations. Because of your organization, children and their families were able to leave the Petersen Automotive Museum with a clear traffic and safety focus as they begin going back to school. Thank you for your support.

I look forward to keeping in contact with your organization, and to keep you informed with upcoming events here at the Petersen.

Cordially,
Audrey Walter, Education Department
Petersen Automotive Museum

Mr. Tom Choe, P.E., Chief
Division of Operations

Dear Mr. Choe:

I want to thank the team from Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol for an excellent, informative and interesting presentation. I know you spent a lot of time and effort preparing for our visit, and for that I am very grateful. I know the group from the County of North Jutland (Nordjylland's Amt) were very impressed and came away from the meeting with a lot of information and ideas that will hopefully benefit their community. On behalf of the group and the Consulate, please extend our most sincere thanks to your team and to Lieutenant William Pasley from the California Highway Patrol.

Sincerely yours,
Troels Jakobsen, Consul, American Attache

Mr. Frank Quon, Chief, Operations

Dear Mr. Quon:

On behalf of the delegation of the Department of Technique and Environment in the County of Northern Jutland, I would like to express my sincere thanks for your hospitality during our recent visit.

In the light of the general conditions, the infrastructure, landscape, dimensions and even the climate is different from California to Denmark, one can always benefit from experiencing how others chose to solve different situations.

I am convinced that the week we spent in California has provided us with invaluable inspiration in our daily work back home.

Sincerely yours,

Niels K. Kirketerp

Chairman, Department of Technique and Environment, County of Northern Jutland, Denmark



The recent Back to School Safety Smarts Fair at the Petersen Automotive Museum was a huge success! Caltrans was one of six traffic and safety organizations that participated in an effort to educate kids on the importance of traffic safety. Children and their families were treated to excellent presentations and invaluable information was made available to the hundreds of visitors. Judy Reynolds, Training Officer, represented District 7 at the event. She said, "Caltrans got another opportunity to emphasize to school-age children to stay out of construction zones encountered on their way to school. Through our partnership with the Petersen Automotive Museum's Discovery Center, we have the opportunity to promote safety along the lines of transportation." Located at 6060 Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, the museum houses hundreds of vintage cars, as well as impressive displays on the history of transportation. At their Discovery Center, Caltrans has fabricated an inter-



Robert W. Sassaman gets help from Erika Gallo, Student Assistant, Media Relations/Public Affairs, in boxing the toys, clothing and many other items donated by generous District 7 employees for delivery to the Los Angeles Rescue Mission last December.

esting and educational presentation on freeway safety. Everyone is encouraged to visit the Caltrans display and all the other great exhibits at the Petersen Automotive Museum soon! For additional information, call the museum at (323) 964-6356.

Our holiday gift collection for the Los Angeles Rescue Mission was a big success! District 7 was able to give to the Mission five extra large boxes of toys and clothing, one medium box of clothing, a donation of \$20 and two beautiful food baskets. Thank you to all who donated for your generosity.

According to Bill Stewart, District Surveys Engineer, once again District 7 "family" and friends have topped their previous level of participation in the annual "Callie Joel Buser Memorial Scholarship Fundraiser." Stewart said that a check for \$1,700 was sent to Headquarters (where the statewide program is coordinated), which is by far the greatest amount any district or region raised this year for the scholarship program, and is also a record for District 7. The Los Angeles Chapter of Professional Engineers in California Government (PECG) and the District 7 Quarter Century Club, each made a donation of \$200. Stewart said "Of course, District 7

staff remain very involved in the program, since the scholarship is named after "one of our own," Callie Joel Buser, who was tragically killed by an errant driver on July 29, 1992, while on duty performing survey work on the Antelope Valley Freeway (Route 14) near Acton." Thank you to PECG, the Quarter Century Club, and all who donated to this very worthy and important Memorial Scholarship.

Director's Chair

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issues are very high on Governor Gray Davis' agenda, and paramount is alleviating traffic congestion, particularly in the Los Angeles area. I would appreciate any suggestions or comments from any employee who may see something in their travels along our vast freeway/highway system. Caltrans District 7 employees travel practically every freeway in Southern California; so who better to offer ideas or suggestions? All comments are welcome and very much appreciated. Don't wait for the boss to tell you how to fix something; you can try to figure out how to fix it first! Thank you in advance for your comments or suggestions. •

ROBERT W. SASSAMAN
District Director



What's **Cookin'** At *Caltrans*

STEVE DEVORKIN'S "BARBECUE" MEATBALLS

Compliments of Steve Devorkin,
Graphic Services Department

"This dish was introduced into our household by my wife, Lynne. It was one of the many dishes served in her family's 150-year-old house on their cattle ranch located at the junction of State Route 89 and 49 in Sierraville, California." -- Steve Devorkin

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 lb. lean ground beef | 1/2 cup milk |
| 1 cup onions, minced | 1/2 cup bread crumbs |
| 1 egg | 1/2 teaspoon pepper |
| 1 teaspoon salt | |

Combine above and shape into 12 meatballs. Brown in 2 tablespoons oil in skillet. Drain excess fat.

Sauce:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 eight-ounce cans tomato sauce | 2 tablespoons vinegar |
| 1/2 cup molasses or brown sugar | 1 teaspoon seasoned salt |

Combine the sauce ingredients and pour over meatballs. Simmer over low heat for 10-15 minutes, turning frequently until meatballs are glazed. Serve over rice. Serves 4.

Inside *Seven*

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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 7 • EXTERNAL AFFAIRS UNIT
120 SOUTH SPRING STREET • ROOM 100
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 897-4867 • FAX (213) 897-3674
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/>

EDITOR JEANNE BONFILIO
MEDIA RELATIONS CHIEF MARGIE TIRITILLI
STAFF WRITERS PAT REID
..... IVY ESTRADA
GRAPHIC SERVICES MONICA MURILLO
PHOTOGRAPHY STEVE DeVORKIN
PRINTING GRAPHIC SERVICES
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Caltrans

GRAY DAVIS
Governor

MARIA CONTRERAS-SWEET
Secretary - Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

JOSÉ MEDINA
Director - California Department of Transportation



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